

M-12-42-6
Owens-Diggins Property
Big Woods Community
Private

1909

Although no house stood on this site, it was a part of the black community of Big Woods since it was purchased by the Owens family in 1909. Since then it has been owned by his relatives, who also owned property adjacent to it.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 12-42-6
Mag1 #

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

The Owens - Diggins Family Property
AND/OR COMMON**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

North side of Big Woods Road

CITY, TOWN

Poolesville☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Montgomery**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☒ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

Abandoned

NAME

L.E. Owens c/o Mr. Fred Stearns Telephone #: 301-972-8481

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 247

CITY, TOWN

Poolesville☒ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 20837**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.Montgomery County CourthouseLiber #: 274Folio #: 435

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Rockville

STATE

Maryland**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

M:12-42-6

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The lot is wooded and there was never a house built on this site, according to Mrs. Florence Hallman from the Big Woods community.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Black History Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1909

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

There was no house built on this property, but its history goes far back into the history of the Big Woods community.

In the 19th century, it was part of the Hempstone estate and was sold to Benjamin White in 1845, as recorded in deed STS 1/42. In 1890 it was sold to the white landowner, Andrew Clinton Brown, who lived in the Barnesville vicinity. He did not live in this community, according to Florence Hallman from Big Woods. In 1909, the Brown family sold this tract of 2.76 acres to John C. Owens, as recorded in deed 210/401. Owens then sold the land to Thomas Dawson in 1913, according to deed 238/374. And finally in 1919, Louisa E. Owens purchased the tract from Thomas Dawson, Mary A. Dawson and Ida C. Owens, the wife of John C. Owens. According to Florence Hallman, Louisa Owens was the mother of Jess and Courtney Diggins. Jess Diggins was raised in the house adjacent to this tract according to oral tradition. The title is still in the name of his mother.

As part of this survey, two of the photographs of the Diggins family collection were copied. One was of Rev. D.L. Washington, minister of the Mt. Zion Church, and the other was of Nettie Mary Owens, born in 1894 and died at age 17, sister of Jessie and Milton Courtney Diggins.

This log house of the Diggins family was representative of the type occupied by many Black families near the turn of the 19th century and into the 20th. In fact for some people, such as Jessie Diggins who lived here, the log house was the only type they lived in during their entire lives.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land records, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Md.

Oral interviews (not taped) with Florence Hallman and Fred & Jane Stearns
Big Woods, August-September, 1978.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

George McDaniel, Surveyor

Wesley Stubbs, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

7/79

STREET & NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland 20753

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



Rev. D.C. Washington
minister of Mt. Zion M.E Church
Big Woods Community
M-12-42-6

original in possession of
Fred + Jane Stearns

copy by Anne Lewis, photographer

173-#10



Nettie Mary Owens, born 1894

Sister of Jessie + Milton Courtney

Diggins

M. ~~42-12-6~~ M. 12-42-6

Big Woods community

copy by Anne Lewis

original in possession of

Fred + Jane Stearns, Big Woods